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PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY REPORTS.

Status and progress of epidemics.

Asiatic cholera.—In response to a request made through the State Department for a report on the rumored existence of cholera at Kharhof, a city in European Russia, 420 miles southwest of Moscow, the consul at Moscow called on the chief of the sanitary bureau of the Zemstvo of the Moscow government and was informed that to June 7 not a single case of cholera had occurred contrary to all circulating reports. There have been some suspicious cases in the Samara, Saratov and Astrakhan governments, the consul writes, and also 1 case in the Kharkov government, but these cases on investigation did not prove to be Asiatic cholera.

A Turkish circular letter, dated May 2, says that by decision of the superior Ottoman council of health all sanitary measures have been suspended against cholera in the mainland provinces of Persia. The interdiction against the transportation of cadavers from Persia into Mesopotamia has also been annulled.

In Persia the cholera epidemic appears to have come to an end after a prevalence of nearly a year. Notwithstanding the report, May 12, of 3 cases at Teheran, the capital, a telegram received in Constantinople, according to the British delegate on the Ottoman board of health, states that no case has been known to occur in any part of Persia since February 25. A final report on the epidemic has recently been received by the Constantinople board of health from its representative on the Teheran board of health. In this report the disease is described as taking two routes from the Shiah city of Kerbela, near the ruins of Babylon, one through Bagdad and Kermanshah to Teheran and eastern Persia, the other to Basra and the shores of the Persian Gulf. Pilgrims were the principal means of diffusing the disease.

By the first route the spread was traced to caravans coming back from the burying grounds of Kerbela. Teheran, at the time the disease was flourishing there, became a focus from which infection spread in all directions. The measures taken to check the diffusion of the disease seem to have had little effect. At Kermanshah, in March, when the disease broke out there, a nine days' quarantine was established on the frontier and observation posts outside the city, but there

were no expert staff and no means of disinfection. The sanitary cordons were easily broken through. Many highways were left unguarded or were protected only after the disease had already passed along them.

At Teheran a tardy attempt was made to guard the road to Meshed by quarantine, but notwithstanding the precaution the whole of the Khorassan province was invaded. There is a much frequented road between Meshed and Askhabad. By this highway, in spite of the measures imposed at the frontier, cholera entered Russia, where two or three months ago it was reported as still existing in the southeastern provinces, and later as advancing dangerously near to the European frontiers of Russia.

As a result of the prevalence at Teheran the board of health in that city was revived, and has since held regular meetings, the minutes of which are now printed. The British delegate on the Ottoman board of health states that, notwithstanding reports of its presence in Russia in April, the cholera epidemic in Russia came to an end in February. An official statement, says the delegate, issued by the Russian Government in May, declared that no case of cholera had occurred in any part of Russia since February 24. A suspected case occurred in the Don territory in March, but was bacteriologically disproven to be Asiatic cholera.

The Russian Government, at the end of the year 1904, declared the following regions to be threatened with cholera: The shores of the Caspian Sea; the governments of Astrakhan, Saratov, Simbirsk, Kazan, and Nijni-Novgorod; the provinces of Transcaspia, Samarkand, Ferghana, and Syr-Daria; the Russian settlements in the suzerainties of Bokhara and Khiva; the Uralsk province; the Don territory, and the governments of Perm, Ufa, Stavropol, Orenburg, Viatka, Tiflis, Elisabethpol, and Baku. The governments of Yaroslav, Kostroma, Vladimir, and Tver, all on the upper Volga, were added to the list in March, and those of Moscow, Tambof, and Riazar, though not declared menaced, were ordered to prepare for a possible epidemic by opening observation stations along the river.

Yellow fever.—Since the preparation of the last summary there has been no extension of yellow fever into new territory. Reports since received show that 2 cases, with 1 death, occurred at Tierra Blanca, Mexico, during the week ending June 24; 2 cases at Belize, British Honduras, during the week ending June 29; 4 cases and 1 death at Puerto Cortez, Honduras, from June 16 to 21; 2 deaths at Livingston, Guatemala, for the week ending June 24; 4 cases, with 1 death, at Colon, 6 cases, with 3 deaths, at Panama, and 1 case at Paraiso, Panama, from June 23 to June 28; 4 deaths at Guayaquil, Ecuador, during the week ending June 13; and 85 cases, with 34 deaths, at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from May 27 to June 11.

Bubonic plague.—There was a death from bubonic plague at Manchester, England, June 12. The patient was a cook on a vessel that arrived June 8 at Middlesborough, a town which has grown up in recent years near the mouth of the Tees, and has an active trade in loading colliers. The vessel came from Buenos Ayres, via Hamburg, and the sick man traveled by train to his home at Manchester, where he died. The case, it is stated, had no connection with the shipping of the Manchester Ship Canal, which connects Manchester with Liverpool and the sea, thereby making it a port.

The origin of the Manchester plague case, as well as of those cases recently reported in Scotland, has an interesting epidemiological bearing. The opinion prevails in Great Britain that the bubonic plague which recently appeared at Leith, the port of Edinburgh, Scotland, was not due to a disease of long prevalence among rats in the port. No plague-infected rats have been found in the vicinities at Leith where the disease occurred, but 2 dead plague-infected rats were discovered in a rag storehouse where one of the patients worked. There is a rag commerce between Leith and the Levant. Hence it is thought the disease was introduced with rags.

Stress is laid in Great Britain on the circumstance that the first cases of plague at Leith, as well as in the Glasgow outbreak five years ago, were observed among people in quarters of the city in no direct way connected with the port, and that owing to the constant possibility of this widely diffused disease passing without detection through a port anywhere in the world it behooves all medical men, and especially practitioners in the large seaports, to keep in mind the contingency of meeting with plague in unexpected places among cases of obscure illness.

Considered from this point of view, a study of the Leith cases is of decided sanitary value. May 5 a workman employed in the construction of a street railroad was reported to be suffering at his home, a tenement, from enteric fever. He was taken to the hospital for infectious diseases and placed in the typhoid pavilion. Two days later his temperature and general symptoms presented such a character that the diagnosis was changed to typhus and the patient transferred to a well-aired ward. May 9 a bubo developed, and then, after a scrupulous clinical and bacteriological examination, the case was decided to be one of bubonic plague.

The other cases were the wife and two daughters of the sick man, whose disease ended fatally. The mother was employed in a rag storehouse at Leith. Some days before her illness she had remarked two dead rats where she was working. Her work was with new rags (clean clippings) only. She had often seen fleas in her house and on her clothes, and her body bore the marks of these insects. The

infected apartment was but a few steps from the Water of Leith, a continuation of the port not navigable by large steamships. There have been no cases, or suspicious cases, in the shipping at the port. Large quantities of grain are shipped to Leith. There is a regular trade between Leith and Hamburg. Recently plague rats have been taken from vessels arriving from the German port. So the decision as to the origin of the disease rests between rats from Hamburg and rats from the Levant.

A dispatch from the consul at Aden, Arabia, confirms a cable message announcing the cessation of plague at that port in the latter part of May. During about six months there were nearly 2,000 deaths from the disease, the mortality being over 82 per cent of the reported cases. The only imports at American ports from Aden are coffee, skins, and ivory, which merely pass through Aden, but inasmuch as these articles were rehandled there they received thorough disinfection before being forwarded.

Smallpox.—In the month of May there were 12 cases of smallpox in the State of Washington. It was mentioned in the summary for June 2 that, according to an official statement of the board of health, that State was, in the month of April, free from the disease for the first time since 1899.

Cerebro-spinal meningitis.—In Galicia, from April 16 to 29, there were reported 292 cases with 110 deaths from cerebro-spinal meningitis. In the province of Silesia to April 27 there were reported a total number of 82 cases and 28 deaths, and in the Ostran district of Moravia from December 2, 1904, to April 15, 1905, 19 cases and 10 deaths. Sporadic cases occurred in the districts of Misteck, Moravian-Schönberg, and Moravian-Weisskirchen. Cases were also reported in Lower Austria, in Styria, and Bukovine.

Dengue.—In addition to bubonic plague, a number of towns in Queensland, Australia, suffered from an epidemic of dengue during the past spring. Business was seriously interfered with at Brisbane, Ipswich, and Townsville, a third of the population being ill at one time. There have been other epidemics of dengue in Queensland in the past. A case has also occurred at Wagga, in New South Wales.

GENERAL SANITARY INFORMATION.

Contagiousness of leprosy.—The question of the contagiousness of leprosy is discussed in the report just published by the British colonial office on an investigation of the prevalence and distribution of the disease in Basutoland. The investigators gave particular attention to the matter of contagion as a means of spreading leprosy. There was a history, prior to contracting the disease, of more or less close association with lepers in 68 of the 148 cases studied. In 18 of the 68 cases the evidence was of a doubtful nature, but in 50 cases

there was a fairly trustworthy history of close intercourse with other lepers, chiefly members of the same family or inhabitants of the same village. Four patients stated they contracted the disease by sleeping for one night only in huts where lepers were. In the remaining cases any intercourse whatever with lepers was denied.

Tuberculosis congress at Paris.—An international tuberculosis congress will be held at Paris from October 2 to 7, 1905, under the auspices of the President of France. The sessions will be held in the Grand Palace at the Champs Elysées. The president of the congress will be Doctor Hérard, member of the French Academy of Medicine. The congress will consist of four sections, with sectional presidents as follows: Medical pathology, Professor Bouchard; surgical pathology, Professor Lannelongue; preservation and assistance in childhood, Professor Grancher; and preservation and assistance in adult life, Professor Landouzy and Senator Strauss.

UNITED STATES.

[Reports to the Surgeon-General, Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.]

Report from Gulfport, Miss.—Health conditions good.

Acting Assistant Surgeon Sheely reports, July 2, as follows:

The shipping has been clear of any sickness during the past week. While it has been very dry and hot the health of the city has been excellent. No deaths have occurred.

INSPECTION SERVICE, MEXICAN BORDER.

Inspection at Eagle Pass, Tex.

Acting Assistant Surgeon Hume reports as follows:

	Week ended July, 1 1905.
Persons inspected on trains	151
Persons held	0

Inspection at El Paso, Tex.

Acting Assistant Surgeon Alexander reports as follows:

Week ended July 1, 1904: Inspection Mexican Central passengers, 194; inspection Mexican Central immigrants, 82; inspection Japanese, 14; inspection Syrian, 1; disinfection soiled linen imported for laundry work, 587 pieces; fumigation of carload of bones, 1; vaccination children of immigrants, 7.